

A
LETTER

FROM A

Merchant at JAMAICA

TO A

Member of Parliament in LONDON,

Touching the AFRICAN TRADE.

To which is added,

A SPEECH made by a BLACK
of *Gardaloupe*, at the Funeral of
a Fellow-Negro.

L O N D O N,

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25



A LETTER *from a*
Merchant at Jamaica to a
Member of Parliament in
London, touching the
AFRICAN TRADE.

S I R,



HEARING from *England*,
 that there's like to be a
 Struggle next Session of Par-
 liament between the *African*
 Company and the other Tra-
 ders thither; I take the free-

dom to send you a Speech made by a
Black at Guardaloupe, a French Island, upon
 the Funeral of 'a Negro, kill'd by his
 Master for taking a small Loaf of Bread

as he pass'd thro the Kitchin: From which, and what I shall add, you may perhaps collect more of the Iniquity of that Trade, and see more of the Cruelty wherewith the poor Wretches the Negroes are used, than either the Planters or Merchants, the Company or Traders, will think it their Business to shew, or for their Credit or Interest to have known.

The Acquaintance I had the honour to have with you, whilst I was in *England*, gives me reason to believe you so great a Lover of Justice and Humanity, and that you have so much at heart the *just Rights and Libertys of Mankind*, that I persuade my self you will take pleasure in doing what in you lies for the *Relief and Ease* of so many *miserable Men*, who are really *treated worse than Brutes*. Your God-like Mind, I'm sure, knows the *Joy of doing Good*. And a greater Good can hardly be imagin'd, than to help and relieve so many *Thousands of miserable Men*, who groan under the *Weight* of an insupportable *Tyranny and Oppression*.

The *Black* seems to have so fully argu'd the Justice and Injustice wherewith they are acquir'd, that I need say little upon that Head: But I shall give you two or three Instances of the Usage they meet with

with after they are brought to *America*;
with my Thoughts in general.

A Ship being arriv'd at a certain Plan-
tation, a Planter goes on board to buy;
he casts his eye upon a stout jolly young
Fellow: *Captain*, says he, *what shall I give*
you for that Man? Sir, says the *Captain*,
he has a Wife; if you have him, you must
take the Cow too. — *Which is she?* —
This. — *D—n her*, says the Planter, *she's*
an ill-thriven Jade; I'll not meddle with her:
Prithee let me have the Fellow alone. — He's
very fond of her: you'll have no good of
him without her. — I'll venture that,
says the Planter: *Come, set your own Price.*
By this time the Black perceiv'd they were
treating about him; and fearing they
meant to separate him from his Wife, steps
to her, 'takes her in his Arms, looks upon
her with all the Passion and Fondness of a
loving Husband; then goes to the Planter,
points to his Wife, then to himself, and
by his Looks and Actions seem'd to signify
he beg'd the Planter would buy them both;
and that if he did, it would be the grea-
test Obligation in the World, and he might
expect a Return in good Services.

The Planter, to please and delude the
poor Wretch, signify'd by Looks and Signs
he would. But the *Captain* sets his Price;

the Planter strikes him : And now the matter is, how to decoy the poor Man from his Wife. The Planter signifies to him, that he had bought them both ; and that they were to go immediately on shoar. The overjoy'd Negro falls upon his knees, kisses the Planter's hands, and is almost transported. Both Man and Wife are brought to the Ship-side ; the Man goes down into the Boat, the Woman still in the Ship ; the Boat, as order'd, strait puts off. The Negro seeing himself thus deluded, and ready to be rent from what *Nature* had so closely join'd him to, snatches up an Oar, and knocks the Rowers down, returns to the Ship-side, and ascends with all the Resentment and Fury, that so base and inhuman an Action cou'd produce ; runs to his Wife, clasps her in his Arms, looks with Anger and Indignation upon the Planter and Captain, and draws his Finger along his Throat ; meaning he'd cut that if they parted him from his Wife. The Planter seeing the Constancy and Resolution of the Man, and what he was to expect if he did not take the Wife too ; and having set his mind upon the Fellow, vouchsafed in his great Goodness to buy them both. So much for our Traffick.

The

The next Instance is of the Usage of our Negroes, when we have bought them. Tis this——On a Sunday a Planter taking a Tour about his Plantation, finds a Stranger Black Woman with one of his Black Men in the Negro's Hutt. *Hussy!* says the Planter, *who are you? To whom do you belong?* And, without staying for an Answer, falls a caning her. His Negro beseech'd him to spare her, for that she was his Friend. *Why, Sirrah!* says he, *what Friends have you? If you want a Woman, have not I Women enou' for you? You Dog you! Sirrah, whose is she?* and began to maul him. Sir, says the Negro, for God's sake forbear: I'll tell you.——*Out with't then, you Dog.*——*Why, Sir, she's such an one's Servant in the Town.*——*But, you Rascal, what does she here? I'll teach you to bring other Peoples Servants upon my Plantations.* (Then falls on him again) *And for you, Hussy! I'll teach you better manners than to come here again. Here!* (calling to his Servants) *strip this W—re; tie her to yonder Tree, and let her have forty sound Lashes with the Cat-of-nine-tails.* The poor trembling Woman, scar'd almost out of her wits with this dreadful Sentence, falls upon her knees, and in the most humble and earnest manner beseeches his Mer-

cy; for that she meant no harm. *Why, you d—'d B—ch, says he, what came you here for then?* To tell you true, says the poor thunder-struck Creature, I'm your Servant's Wife. *Are you so!—Then let her have forty Lashes more; and as for the D--g, I'll sacrifice him for daring to meddle with any Women but mine.* The Negro takes to his heels, and hides himself. The Woman's stript, unmercifully lash'd, and let go. Some time after, the Negro comes into his Master's Presence, hoping the Storm was blown over: But so far had the Spirit of Rage and Cruelty the ascendant; that tho the Fellow was better worth than 50*l.* per ann. to him, in looking after the boiling of Sugars and other things; yet the most earnest Requests and Intreatys of the Planter's Wife and other Friends present were all little enough to dissuade him from killing him; and with difficulty he was restrain'd from imbruing his Hands in the poor Man's Blood.

The last Instance I shall trouble you with, is, of the Manner and Measure of some of our Punishments.

At a principal Town of a considerable Island in this part of the World, a Woman Negro-Servant had stole a Silver Cup, or some such small thing, from her Master;
(probably

(probably to buy some little Necessaries for the Child she went with.) Now he might either correct her in his own House, or order her to be chastiz'd in the open Market by the hands of the common Whipsman. He chose the latter. Out she's led to the Whipping-Post in the Market-Place; and tho' she was so big with Child, that she seem'd near her Delivery, yet she was stript stark naked, her Hands ty'd in a Rope, by which she was hoisted till she stood on tip-toe, and all her Parts so distended, as one would have thought a Blow must have made 'em crack and fly asunder. Thus naked, thus distended, thus big with Child, the Executioner of Cruelty comes to her with a Whip made of Wires, and falls on so unmercifully, you would have thought each following Lash would sure have made the Child spring from her Body: yet still her cruel Master's Eye pity'd not; nor did the Beadle's Hand spare her. Thus stood this miserable Spectacle in the face of the Sun and of the World, whipt and scourg'd so long, so cruelly, till to the shame of those who call themselves *Men*, *good-natur'd Men*, and *Christians*, till to their lasting shame the poor Wretch felt such Pains and unspeakable *Agonys*, as made her sweat even *Drops of Blood*;

Blood; whilst all her Back and hind Parts were so gaul'd and flay'd, that they no longer look'd like human Body, but all appear'd one Piece of mangled Flesh with reeking Gore. The poor Creature, enduring all these racking Torments with an invincible Patience, did not so much as open once her mouth. The cruel Execution ended (if it may be said to be so when so much Smart's to follow) her furrow'd Back and bleeding Wounds were wash'd with Salt and Water. A sharp Remedy, you'll say—But yet, you'll think it mild, compar'd with what they do in some Plantations.—Sometimes, if they think Scourging and such-like too gentle Punishments, forgetting all Humanity, they will with a Knife lay open the *Flesh* of a Slave's Limbs in long *Furrows*, and then pour a *hot Liqueur*, made of Pitch, Tar, Oil, Wax, and Brimstone, or such-like Ingredients into the *Green Wounds*.

Thus, Sir, I have given you just a Taste of our *Humanity*: for to attempt the recounting all our Methods of dealing, and our many Ways of punishing those miserable Creatures, were as endless as what *Avarice* and *Iniquity* can suggest, or what the *Caprice* and *Cruelty* of
Men,

Men, *bounded by no Fences of human Law*, can invent and execute.

Yet this is the Case of those Wretches, whom were the D——l himself to torment, and yet profit by or expect their Labour, I do not easily see how he could make them more miserable.

Why they should be thus treated I cannot imagine. The most of them are taken in War, and by the Custom of those barbarous Nations the Captors are reputed to have Right, or however they have got the Power, to kill or do what else they please with their Prisoners. The Custom of Servitude, as it was at first introduc'd by Men, who would not forbear one Cruelty, except they exercis'd another not much less; so was it not every where, or at all times receiv'd. *Gro. de jure B. & P. l. 3. c. 7. §. 8.* Whatever cruel Barbarians may think or practise, 'tis plain all the Christian, I might perhaps say all the Civiliz'd World, account it barbarous and inhuman to kill a Prisoner, or treat him ill after you have given him Quarter; and they have intirely laid aside the Custom of Slavemaking, as being against all Rules of Charity: *Gro. Vol. 1. §. 9.* For the end of all just War being Peace, *i. e.* a quiet Enjoyment of Life and Property, what occasion

sion is there to kill a Man I have disarm'd, and from whom I have nothing to fear, and who perhaps had no Malice, but fought against me only because his Prince or Captain would have tuckt him up if he had not? And if in such Case it be inhuman to take his Life, it is almost as bad to take from him the Liberty of a rational Creature, and to spare his Life no longer than he blindly submits his Understanding, and all his Facultys both of Mind and Body, to the imperious Dictates of my Will, how unreasonable and extravagant soever. But then even among those who allow'd of *Servitude*, yet it was upon supposition of a *just War*; for otherwise the Conquerors were so far from having a Right to kill, that if they knew the War to be unjust, it was Murder if they did; and by consequence also they could have no Right to enslave or sell, or so much as keep their Prisoners. So sensible were the *Romans* of this; that *Grot. c. 10. §. 6.* gives several Instances of their making *Restitution* of what they had took in *unjust Wars*; so that they even sold Lands bought with the Price of Captives, and rebought whom they had *before sold, and set them at liberty.* And *Grotius, Vol. i.* is clearly of Opinion, that if one *possess Goods* taken in

an *unjust War*, tho he had no hand in the taking them, or did it innocently, yet he is *bound to restore* them. But admitting we had as good a Right in our Slaves as we are willing to imagine, yet still they are Men. And tho the *Law* has a great while indulg'd or conniv'd at *our being Judges in our own Cause*; yet it seems but a piece of natural *Justice and Equity*, that no Man should be so in matters of any moment, where a more *impartial Judge* may be found; Or, however, if the *Law* thinks fit to allow them this, yet it would seem but reasonable that, like *all other Judges*, they should *forfeit their Office*, if they be ever guilty of *abusing it*.

These unhappy Mortals, the Negroes, make a great part of the *African Trade*, about which there is like to be so great a Bustle. Let them take it for me that like it: Let them study Ways and Means to preserve and increase it. It has never yet thriv'd, nor do I believe ever will, till 'tis manag'd with more Justice and Humanity both in the first and after Buyer. We have had many publick Calamitys in this Island, and many of our Neighbours have smarted too. I do not wonder, I rather admire the Divine Goodness and Forbearance.

It

It must be own'd our Plantations are of great Consequence to both Us and *England*. They are work'd and cultivated mostly by the hands of Negroes, and it would be hard to do it by any others. But it does not therefore follow, that those poor Wretches, by whose Labour we are enrich'd, must not be treated with Humanity and Reason; or if they are ill us'd, that the Law should give them no Protection or Redress. 'Tis very hard, that whilst they help to make us some of the happiest People in the World, we should in return make them the most unhappy, the most wretched and miserable part of the Creation. No, Sir, you well know no Advantage can legitimate Injustice and Inhumanity. Whatever Advantages are built upon such false, such rotten Foundations, however they stand for a time, will surely end in Ruin and Destruction. I make no Apology for my long Letter: I know you will excuse it. I heartily pray Heaven may incline your wise Senate to do somewhat for the Relief and Ease of so many, who are basely oppress'd, and inhumanly treated by their unjust and cruel Masters. It would be an Act worthy of so August an Assembly. It would be laying so good a Foundation of Power and Riches,

Riches, as might probably outlast human Expectation. Certain 'tis, it would render them the Delight of all good Men. Heaven would look down on so becoming an Action, and all Generations would call them blessed.

I am with great Respect and Affection,

Octob. 10.

1708.

S I R,

Your most humble Servant.

A

*A SPEECH made by a
BLACK of Gar-
daloupe, at the Funeral
of a Fellow-Negro.*



THE great and beneficent Creator, the *Best* of Beings, as Reason tells, and as our Master's Books assure us, when he had form'd this Speck of Earth, was pleas'd to crown the Work, by making Man, on whom he stamp'd the Image of Himself. All he expected in return, was but a just and grateful sense of the kind Maker's Bounty, and an honest Care to copy after the Divine Original in doing good ; that is, in other words, promoting his own and others *Happiness*.
The

The good and wise *Maker* had sufficiently furnish'd Man with Facultys necessary to so kind and glorious a Design. He gave him the Powers of Perceiving, Deliberating, Judging: He implanted in him a strong Desire of preserving his own Being and Happiness, and gave him unexpressible Tendernesses towards others. And as God made of the same *common Mold* all People, so whilst he subjected the inferior Animals to these little Vice-Roys, he left them all free to use and follow the Conduct of that *Divine Ray* of Reason, whereby they were shew'd and taught that reasonable Service which he requir'd. He made them, I say, free to follow this bright and faithful Guide, so soon as they should grow up to Man, and their Eyes were strong enough to bear the Light; that so the Creator might have the Glory of a free and chearful Service, and the Creature the Reward of Virtue, and an unconstrain'd Obedience. But, alas! how far is Mankind fallen? How much degenerated from the pure and happy State in which God created them? Sin introduc'd Sloth in some, Wantonness and Luxury in others. These were tempted to affect Command over, and Service from others; while those were again inclin'd to a base

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Submission

Submission and Dependence, rather than be at the Pains of exerting those Powers the wise Author of Nature had given them, which were abundantly sufficient to all the Purposes of Life; and so they, like the profane *Eſau*, whom we read of in our Master's Books, sold their Birth-right and Inheritance for a poor Meſs of Pottage. Thus fond Mankind forſook the Divine Light plac'd in their Breasts, and by first becoming Servants to their own Luſts and Appetites, became Servants to each other. It had been well, comparatively ſpeaking, had Matters ſtop'd here; for hitherto there is no Wrong, no Violence: Beſides, the Infirmitys of Nature made it a neceſſary and even prudent Charity to ſerve their Neighbour in time of want, whoſe Aſſiſtance they again in their Turn might need and expect.

And if any ſet ſo little Value on the Gem of Liberty, as quite to part with it for a little Bread, which they might have reap'd and made with their own hands, they were to thank themſelves for ſo fooliſh a Bargain, and had nothing to complain of but their want of Industry and Wit. But ſtill this extended no farther than their own Conſent had carry'd it; and the Agreement being mutual, they were

were no longer bound by it than their Masters perform'd their part, and treated them fairly. But the Lust of Dominion and the Desire of possessing, seizing Mens Brains, they grew fierce and raging, broke thro' the Ties of Nature and Humanity; and upon slender, or only pretended Causes, made War upon their weaker and more innocent Neighbours. Hence is the Source of all our Woes and Miserys; to these we owe our Captivity and Bondage; to these we must lay the innocent Blood of our Brother who lies murder'd, barbarously murder'd, before us. Good God! what have we done? What Right have these cruel Men thus to oppress, insult, and inhumanly butcher their Fellow-Creatures? Let us examine all their Title, and see what it amounts to; and then we shall the better know, whether their Usage of us, or our Complaints, are the more just. They say, they bought us with their Money. — Confess'd; but who had Power to sell? We were it may be condemn'd by colour of Law, that is, the Will of some Great Man, to be sold by way of Banishment for some suppos'd Crime. — But how did the Buyer know there ever was a Crime committed, or that

the Sentence was just? or if he did, what Right can this confer? 'Tis plain, I think, it gives him only Right to carry us whither he pleas'd, and make us work till we repaid him by our Labor what we cost, with other Charges.

It may be we were taken in War; what Right then had the Conqueror? or what did he transfer? Suppose the War against us was just, and that our Buyers knew 'twas so; yet they likewise know, that 'tis barbarous and cruel to take a conquer'd Enemy's Life, when the Injur'd can be safe without it; and that 'tis still more barbarous and inhumane for another to take it away, to whom he has sold and deliver'd his Prisoner; since by the Sale and Price receiv'd he seems to have taken the Money for his Security, and upon that Consideration runs the Hazard of the other's setting him at liberty if he thinks fit. So that 'tis plain, this gives them no such Right over our Lives, as any Man that has the least Tendernefs or Humanity (I might, I think, say Justice) would make use of. And as for perpetual Slavery— it must be cruel Justice, that for so small a Sum, so soon repaid, wou'd purchase and exact what makes his Fellow-

low-

low-Creature, from whom he has nought to fear, so miserable for Life. If they contend for this as a Right which they are fond of, let them shew it, and let them take it and the sole Glory of it. But who told our present Lords the War was just? Do Victory and Right go always hand in hand? No, our Masters by Experience know they don't. This then at best can give but a dark doubtful Right, which never can defeat that natural and undoubted one the God of Nature has bestow'd on Men, to have, to own, no other Lord but *him*.

It may have happen'd we were sold to pay our Debts: What will this give them? In Equity they have at most hereby a Right to so much Service as will pay the Debt and Charges of transporting us. The first was all the Creditor could ask. But do they know what this Debt was? No, they never so much as once enquir'd or ask'd to be inform'd. We were perhaps bought of some unkind unnatural Father. Be it so. What have they got by this? Can a Father transfer what he has not? or have they what he neither did or cou'd possibly give them? surely no. A Father has Power indeed, and ought to

B 3

help

help and feed his young and tender Offspring, as all Creatures do, but not to cast them out into the Fields, or sell them wantonly to a base Servitude. God gave him Power to beget and become a Father of Men, not Slaves. A Father, as 'tis fit, has Power too to guide and steer his Childrens Actions while Reason's weak ; and if by Age, or otherwise, he's brought to want their help, they are oblig'd by Nature, and by Gratitude, to give their helping hand and best Assistance. But still they are not his Slaves or lasting Property ; for when wise Nature has fitted them to propagate and educate their Kind, Reason requires, and Nature loudly tells they are at Liberty, they then are Men. It's true, we seem oblig'd to our Lords, that they were pleas'd to take us off the Hands of cruel Conquerors, or such wanton and unnatural Parents as begot us only for their Pleasure ; either of which might likely have destroy'd, if they cou'd not have sold us. But it wou'd be remember'd, no Benefit obliges further than the Intention. Was it then for our sakes, or for their own, our Masters built such mighty Ships in which they plow the Main ? Was it for us they laid out so much

much Wealth? Or was it to save our Lives, they so much ventur'd and expos'd their own? Alas! the Answer is too obvious: Our hard Labour, and harder Fare, but most of all, our cruel Punishments, and perpetual Bondage, but too plainly shew for whose sake all this was done. But besides, 'tis certain many Wars are made, many Children parted with, only because there are so many Buyers. So that all we have to thank them for, is, that they fought to serve themselves; and doing so, they sav'd us from those first of Ills their Avarice had wrought. Further, Many of us, it may be, are bought neither of the Governour or Conquerour, of Creditor or Parent; but of a treacherous Friend, a perfidious Husband, or an odious Man-stealer. These are far from conferring any Right, unless what can arise from the most unjust and inhuman Acts in the world. What's now become of all their boasted Right of absolute Dominion? It is fled. Where all our Obligations to perpetual Servitude? They are vanish'd. However, we may perhaps owe them something; and it were but just, if so, they should be paid. Let us therefore, if from the account I have already given we can, make an Estimate of

B 4

the

the Ballance.——Supposing then one half of us were justly sold at first by those that had a Right to all our Services, if that may be suppos'd : Suppose likewise that our Masters knew it too, and who the very Persons were : They then would have at most a Right to the Labour of such Persons during Life ; and of the rest, till they had earn'd and clear'd so much as was given to the Captain who brought 'em hither. But since it is impossible for them to know on whom to place their several Demands ; and since they bought us all at random, without regard to Right or Wrong : let us for once suppose favourably for them, who never favour'd us ; let us suppose our Masters innocent of all the Wrongs we first sustain'd. Suppose us Men, Women, and Children come to their Shoar from some far-off unknown Land, under the Power of a strange Captain of a Ship, who pretends he has a Right to sell us. He offers to deliver us, Great and Small, into their hands at 20*l.* a-piece. They pay the Mony. We are deliver'd up. What are we now in debt ? 'Tis plain, I think, that since they neither know nor did regard his Title, they can at best have one but till they're reimburs'd the Cost and Charge which they've been at.

at. 'Tis sure we had a plain and natural Right to Life and Liberty; which to take away upon a weak, presumptive, or a may-be Title, were to make us of less value than Beasts and Things Inanimate: a Property in which, by Reason's Law, is never gain'd against a true and just Owner upon slight Presumptions, whatever may be done by Laws of particular Societys, to which each one agrees. But were it otherwise in mere Possessions, yet Life and Liberty are hardly things of so low rate, that they're to pass as lightly from the Owner, to whom God gave the sole and certain Property, as Beasts, or Birds, or Things Inanimate, which bounteous Nature laid in common, and wherein strictly no Man has more Right than what is necessary for him and his Dependants.

Let any Man but make the Case his own, and he'll soon see the Hardship. Would not any one think himself greatly injur'd, if another should make him his perpetual Slave, only because he gave 20 l. for him, to one who had him in his power? Methinks the very naming it is enough to shock a Man; and he should need no further Argument to convince him of the Injustice of the thing. But Men are hardly brought to see what makes against their Interest. Ta-
king

king the matter now to be as last stated—
 Suppose Twenty of us bought at once;
 the Money paid would be 400*l.* suppose six
 of the Twenty Children; suppose also one
 of us to die each year; reckon the Labour
 of each of those of sufficient Age at 10*l.*
 a year, which is really less than it may be
 well accounted, seeing a great part of our
 poor Sustenance is owing to our own Hands
 and Industry, which we are forc'd to em-
 ploy in planting Herbs and Roots, whilst
 we should rest from our more toilsom La-
 bour. By this Computation we should
 have paid all our joint Debt in three
 years time. Yet would our Lords but use
 us as Men, we should not stick to a nice
 Computation, but frankly serve them three
 or four years more, before we claim'd our
 Freedom. Many of us here present have
 serv'd twice, some seven times the space
 our cruel Lords can justly claim. Of our
 hard Labour, let our weary'd Limbs, their
 well-planted Fields and full Coffers all bear
 witness. Of their hard and cruel Usage
 let our torn Backs testify. Of their bloody
 Inhumanity, let the Corps of our dear
 Countryman before us, weltring in its
 Goar; let it, I say, for ever witness a-
 gainst the cruel Authors of our Woe:
 who not content to make us Slaves,
 Slaves

Slaves for Life, do use us worse than Dogs, and deny us the Compassion they would shew a Horse. 'Tis true, they willingly will teach and make us Christians; while they themselves want to be taught, both They and We are Men. In this however we are somewhat better used than are our wretched Friends in *English* Isles; where their hard Masters forbear to do good, lest that oblige them to do more. Ridiculous Superstition! that will not allow their Servants to be Christians, lest they be forc'd to allow them to be Men. This is to found Dominion upon the Gospel of that Divine Teacher Jesus, who told them plain as Words could make it, his Kingdom was not of this World. And as if none were intitled to the common Privileges of Nature, except they please to allow 'em them by Washing or Baptizing, they carefully forbid our Brethren that. What I pray is this, but to make sport with the Creation, and to monopolize the Blessings of our common Mother Earth? Our hardy Tutors know things better. They teach us what themselves seem hardly to believe; and by giving us hopes of another better World, endeavour to make us content that they alone shou'd enjoy this: teach us to do Good
for

for Evil; and when we have done no fault, to turn our Cheeks to the Smiter, and our Backs to the Scourger; to submit not only to froward and unjust, but even to merciless and cruel Masters; remembering us that their Gospel says, *Thro many Sufferings and Tribulations we must enter into the Heavenly Country*; that Country where our dear, our patient, our murder'd Brother's gone. But why shou'd we complain of Death, whose Life's so miserable to us? To kill us, seems the greatest kindness that our bloody Lords can do. We have lost our native Country, our Friends, our Liberty; we are made Slaves to haughty cruel Men; we are fed and work'd hard; their Will's our Law; which when we do transgress, we suffer all the wanton Cruelty they can devise: No Prayers or Tears can touch their harden'd Hearts; relentless as Rocks, they know no Pity. What now remains in Life to be desir'd? 'Tis better far to die, than, being Men, be forc'd to live like Beasts: Beasts! and of those the most unhappy too. Still, tho our Hardships are as great as the Injustice of our Oppressors; tho our Sufferings are as many as the hated Days we live; tho all their Pleas of Right are false or short: methinks I cou'd forgive them
all,

all, did they not pretend Necessity for their inhuman Acts. They tell, it seems, the *European* World, we're of such base, such brutal Natures, that nought will govern us, but downright Force and Fear; That like the Horse we must be broke and rid with Whip and Spur, but with far closer Reins. Abominable Forgery! Hated Imposture! What, are we not Men? Have we not the common Facultys and Passions with others? Why else has Nature given us human Shape and Speech? Whence is't that some of these wise rational Masters of ours give us sometimes Charge, not only of their Works and Cash, but of their Persons too; and make us judg when they're debauch'd enough in Wine, and when it's time to lug them home upon our servile Backs? Whence is it that some of us, without the Help of Books or Letters, are found able to deliver a Message, or do Business better, even by their own Confession, than they who intrust us with it? But were it a wonder, that while they use us so like Beasts, we shou'd not act as Men? If they give us no Motives to Industry and Obedience, but a base servile Fear, is it at all strange, when that's remov'd, the hated Service straight shou'd cease? It wou'd
be

be strange indeed, shou'd it be otherwise. Cou'd they be brought to deal with us as Men, they soon wou'd see, we may be wrought upon by gentler Methods far than Blows and Scourges. But while they use us thus, how can they e're expect we shou'd not hate them? how can they hope our Services shou'd once proceed from Hearts they never touch'd, unless with Detestation? Let them make tryal of their own Countrymen, and see what will be the difference 'twixt them and us. As much Slaves as they are already, this likely will be all the odds, they'l hate them more, and bear their Usage worse than we. To finish and compleat our Miserys, these Lords of ours, not content that we are Slaves, Slaves basely us'd for Life, they make our innocent Babes their Property, as if they sprung from Brutes. If their Right to us be so uncertain or so small, as I have shew'd it is; with what Pretence, with what Face, can they enslave our guiltless Children? who have committed nothing to deserve the loss of Liberty in a base servile tedious Life, a Life beneath the State of Brutes. Supposing we were justly theirs for Life, which they can never shew; yet still, the most they can demand from Innocents is some small time
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of Labour, for the little Sustenance which they receiv'd by means of these our Lords. But not content with this, they carry on the wrong, and make them Slaves for Life as they made us; and claim our Childrens Children, and so on, to all Posterity. Thus, our Lords who call themselves White-men and Christians, led by their Avarice and Luxury, commit the blackest Crimes without a Blush, and wickedly subvert the Laws of Nature, and the Order of Creation. Let us, my dearest Countrymen and Fellow-sufferers! Let us in this our great Distress and Misery, look up to the great Author of Nature, whose Works and Image are so basely us'd; and earnestly implore his mighty Aid: Let us beseech him, for sure he hears the Crys and Groans of his oppressed Creatures, either to soften those Adamantine Hearts, which cut us in pieces; or to put it into the Minds of some great, some God-like Men, to come to our Deliverance, that we may sing our Maker's Praise, and with Assurance say, There is a God who governs the Earth, and restrains the Pride and Cruelty of wicked Men.

F I N I S.